That is to say: 'Indeed this letter V, being put in place of a consonant, had in the Latin tongue always and everywhere a force similar to that which the Ϝ digamma had in the Æolian tongue; for which reason V has been called by many persons by the same name that the Æolians had for the said Ϝ digamma, which was *Vau,* according to its pronunciation, as witness Varro & Didymus, who said that it was called *Vau;* for which *Vau* Cæsar chose to write this figure ⊣; but although this figure seemed apt for the said *Vau,* nevertheless ancient custom carried the day, and it was written thus—V. It is so true that the said V was used for the Ϝ, Æolian digamma, that, just as the Æolians sometimes used the Ϝ digamma for a simple consonant, as Astyages shows in divers quoted verses, as in this one, Ορχομενος Ϝελεναν ελικωπιδα, so the Latins often used V as a simple consonant in the stead of F, digamma, as in this verse:

At Venus haud animo nequiquam exterrita mater.

It happens also that the Æolians used their said digamma for a double consonant, as in this example: Νεστορα δε Ϝω παιδος, which practice the Latins seem to follow in the perfect and pluperfect tenses of verbs of the third & fourth conjugations, in which I, standing before V consonant, is lengthened in quantity, & when the V is dropped, the I remains short; as in *Cupivi, cupii; Cupiveram, cupieram; Audivi, audii; Audiveram, audieram.* The Æolians also used their Ϝ digamma, leaving the preceding vowel short; witness the Greek poet Alcman:* Και χειμα πυρ τε δαϜιον. This last is an iambic verse, which should be scanned in such wise that the Ϝ leaves the preceding vowel, which is *Alpha,* short. The Latins did likewise, leaving the vowel short before V, as Horace did when he made *Syluæ* a word of three syllables,—*Sy-lu-æ,*—in his Epodes, when he says:

Nivesque deducunt Iovem, nunc mare, nunc sy-lu-æ.†

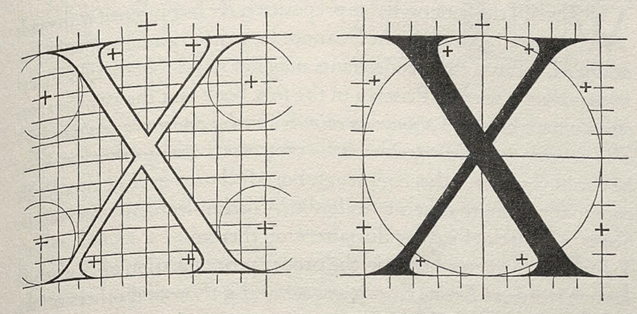
This example is an iambic dimeter, coupled with an heroic pentameter, which cannot be scanned unless the word Syluæ is divided into three syllables.'

I Have quoted Priscian at great length, to show abundantly the proper pronunciation and all the other qualities of the V, to the end that it may be used as it should be; and to show that the Germans pronounce it as a consonant better than any other nation that I know on this side of the mountains, when they say, *Fivat in æternum fundens mihi dulce*

*Or *Alcmaeon. The greatest lyric poet of Sparta. Flourished in the 7th century,* B.C.

†*Epodes,* XIII, 2.

falernum. And, in like manner, *Fifo* for *vivo, Firtus* for *virtus, Finum* for *vinum,* & a thousand others. The Italians pronounce it like a vowel after G and Q, when they say *Lingu-a, Aqu-a,* and separate it from the A; and they pronounce as if it were followed by an O—*Linguo-a, Aquo-a.* We do not pronounce it as they do, which some consider to be a defect in us, & contrary to the art of grammar.



THE letter X here drawn, made from the I alone, requires eight turns of the compass, which are marked in their proper places in the drawing. It is broader at the bottom than at the top, where it is only eight units and two halves in breadth, as can be seen plainly in said drawing.

I Have said that it is made from the I, & this is true according to my theory, although Galeotus Martius Narniensis said that it is made from a C reversed & the Greek *Sigma;* and the reason that moved him thereto is that X has the force of C and S, witness the excellent author, Martianus Capella, who says: X *quicquid* C *et* S *formavit exibilat.* That is to say, X is equivalent in force & in punctuation to C and S. Be careful, when you draw it and write it, not to make the opening as broad at the head as at the foot, or to put the foot at the top, as I see a great many mistakenly do; for the letter would be spoiled thereby.

BEsides the wise teaching of the worthy Martianus, already quoted, according to Priscian, in his first book, wherein he treats *'De accidentibus literæ,* X is equivalent to G and S; for he says: X *duplex, modo pro* C S, *modo pro* G S, *accipitur; ut Apex apicis, Grex gregis.** X, he says, is a double letter, that is to say, is equal to two letters—sometimes to C

*I, VIII, 43.

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